

Pahari-Pothwari

The Indo-Aryan language spoken on the Pothohar Plateau in the far north of Punjab, as well as in most of the Pakistani territory of Azad Kashmir and in western areas of the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir, is known by a variety of names, the most common of which are **Pahari** (English: /pəˈhɑːri/)^[2] and **Pothwari** (or **Pothohari**).

The language is transitional between Hindko and Standard Punjabi.^[3] There have been efforts at cultivation as a literary language,^[4] although a local standard has not been established yet.^[5]

Grierson in his early 20th-century Linguistic Survey of India assigned it to a so-called "Northern cluster" of Lahnda (Western Punjabi), but this classification, as well as the validity of the Lahnda grouping in this case, have been called into question.^[6]

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Pahari–Pothwari	
Potwari, Pothohari	
Native to	Pakistan, India
Region	Pothohar region, Azad Kashmir and western parts of Jammu and Kashmir
Native speakers	2-4 million ^[a]
Language family	<div>Indo-European<ul style="list-style-type: none">Indo-Iranian<ul style="list-style-type: none">Indo-Aryan<ul style="list-style-type: none">Northwestern<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lahnda / Punjabic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pahari–Pothwari</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	phr
Glottolog	paha1251 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/paha1251) <div>Pahari Potwari^[1]</div>

Geographic distribution and dialects

There are at least three major dialects: Pothwari, Mirpuri and Pahari.^[b] They are mutually intelligible,^[7] but the difference between the northernmost and the southernmost dialects (from Muzaffarabad and Mirpur respectively) is enough to cause difficulties in understanding.^[8]

Pothwari

Pothwari (پوٹھواری), also spelt *Potwari*, *Potohari* and *Pothohari* (پوٹھوہاری),^[9] is spoken in the Pothohar Plateau of northern Punjab,^[10] an area that includes parts of the districts of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Chakwal.^[11] Pothwari extends southwards up to the Salt Range, with the city of Jhelum marking the border with Punjabi. To the north, Pothwari transitions into the Pahari-speaking area, with Bharakao, near Islamabad, generally regarded as the point where Pothwari ends and Pahari begins.^[12] Pothwari has been represented as a dialect of Punjabi by the Punjabi language movement,^[5] and in census reports the Pothwari areas of Punjab have been shown as Punjabi-majority.^[c]



Mirpuri

East of the Pothwari areas, across the Jhelum River into Mirpur District in Azad Kashmir, the language is more similar to Pothwari than to the Pahari spoken in the rest of Azad Kashmir.^[13] Locally it is known by a variety of names:^[d] *Pahari*, *Mirpur Pahari*, *Mirpuri*,^[e] and *Pothwari*,^[14] while some of its speakers call it *Punjabi*.^[15] Mirpuris possess a strong sense of Kashmiri identity that overrides linguistic identification with closely related groups outside Azad Kashmir.^[16] The Mirpur region has been the source of the greater part of Pakistani immigration to the UK, a process that started when thousands were displaced by the construction of the Mangla Dam in the 1960s and emigrated to fill labour shortages in England.^[17] The British Mirpuri diaspora now numbers several hundred thousand, and Pahari has been argued to be the second most common mother tongue in the UK, yet the language is little known in the wider society there and its status has remained surrounded by confusion.^[18]

Pahari

Pahari (پہاڑی) is spoken to the north of Pothwari. The central cluster of Pahari dialects is found around Murree.^[19] This area is in the Galyat: the hill country of Murree Tehsil in the northeast of Rawalpindi District (just north of the capital Islamabad) and the adjoining areas in southeastern Abbottabad District.^[20] One name occasionally found in the literature for this language is ***Dhundi-Kairali*** (*Ḍhūṇḍī-Kaiṛālī*), a term first used by Grierson^[21] who based it on the names of the two major tribes of the area – the Kairal and the Dhund.^[10] Its speakers call it *Pahari* in Murree tehsil, while in Abbottabad district it is known as either *Hindko* or *Ḍhūṇḍī*.^[22] Nevertheless, Hindko – properly the language of the rest of Abbottabad District and the neighbouring areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – is generally regarded as a different language.^[23] It forms a dialect continuum with Pahari,^[10] and the transition between the two is in northern Azad Kashmir and in the Galyat region. For example on the road from Murree northwest towards the city of Abbottabad, Pahari gradually changes into Hindko between Ayubia and Nathiagali.^[24]

A closely related dialect is spoken across the Jhelum River in Azad Kashmir, north of the Mirpuri areas. Names associated in the literature with this dialect are *Pahari* (itself the term most commonly used by the speakers themselves), ***Chibhālī***,^[25] named after the Chibhal region^[26] or the Chibh ethnic group,^[11] and ***Poonchi*** (پوچھی, also spelt *Punchhi*). The latter name has been variously applied to either the Chibhali variety specific to the district of Poonch,^[27] or to the dialect of the whole northern half of Azad Kashmir.^[28]

This dialect (or dialects) has been seen either as a separate dialect from the one in Murree,^[21] or as belonging to the same central group of Pahari dialects.^[29] The dialect of the district of Bagh, for example, has more shared vocabulary with the core dialects from Murree (86–88%) than with the varieties of either Muzaffarabad (84%) or Mirpur (78%).^[30]

In Muzaffarabad the dialect shows lexical similarity^[f] of 83–88% with the central group of Pahari dialects, which is high enough for the authors of the sociolinguistic survey to classify it as a central dialect itself, but low enough to warrant noting its borderline status.^[31] The speakers however tend to call their language *Hindko*^[32] and to identify more with the Hindko spoken to the west,^[33] despite the lower lexical similarity (73–79%) with the core Hindko dialects of Abbottabad and Mansehra.^[34] Further north into the Neelam Valley the dialect, now known locally as *Parmi*, becomes closer to Hindko.^[35]

Pahari is also spoken further east across the Line of Control into the Pir Panjal mountains in Indian Jammu and Kashmir. The population, estimated at 1 million,^[36] is found in the region between the Jhelum and Chenab rivers: most significantly in the districts of Poonch and Rajouri, to a lesser extent in neighbouring Baramulla and Kupwara,^[37] and also – as a result of the influx of refugees during the Partition of 1947 – scattered throughout the rest of Jammu and Kashmir.^[38] Pahari is among the regional languages listed in the sixth schedule of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir.^[39]

Distribution of people whose mother-tongue is Pahari in the Indian part of Jammu and Kashmir (including Ladakh), according to the 2011 Indian Census. ^[40]							
District	Division	People		% Pahari mother tongue in district		% Pahari mother tongue in J&K	
		District		District		District	
<u>Doda</u>	Jammu	9,971		1.4%		1.0%	
<u>Jammu</u>	Jammu	5,738		0.8%		0.6%	
<u>Kathua</u>	Jammu	42,776		6.0%		4.4%	
<u>Kishtwar</u>	Jammu	1,019		0.1%		0.1%	
<u>Punch</u>	Jammu	239,402		33.6%		24.5%	
<u>Rajouri</u>	Jammu	356,057		50.0%		36.4%	
<u>Ramban</u>	Jammu	26,237		3.7%		2.7%	
<u>Reasi</u>	Jammu	20,889		2.9%		2.1%	
<u>Samba</u>	Jammu	1,980		0.3%		0.2%	
<u>Udhampur</u>	Jammu	7,518		1.1%		0.8%	
<u>Total Jammu</u>	Jammu		711,587		100.0%		72.8%
<u>Anantnag</u>	Kashmir	13,097		4.9%		1.3%	
<u>Badgam</u>	Kashmir	1,732		0.7%		0.2%	
<u>Bandipore</u>	Kashmir	7,478		2.8%		0.8%	
<u>Baramula</u>	Kashmir	99,563		37.4%		10.2%	
<u>Ganderbal</u>	Kashmir	7,750		2.9%		0.8%	
<u>Kulgam</u>	Kashmir	2,031		0.8%		0.2%	
<u>Kupwara</u>	Kashmir	122,927		46.2%		12.6%	
<u>Pulwama</u>	Kashmir	3,811		1.4%		0.4%	
<u>Shupiyan</u>	Kashmir	4,749		1.8%		0.5%	
<u>Srinagar</u>	Kashmir	2,967		1.1%		0.3%	
<u>Total Kashmir</u>	Kashmir		266,105		100.0%		27.2%
<u>Kargil</u>	Ladakh	0		0.0%		0.00%	
<u>Leh</u>	Ladakh	168		100.0%		0.02%	
<u>Total Ladakh</u>	Ladakh		168		100.0%		0.02%
Jammu & Kashmir			977,860		100.0%		100.0%

Comparison with Punjabi

- Use of Sī-endings for Future Tense



Potohar scenery with *pahar* backdrop

Pothwari			Punjabi		
Transliteration	Shahmukhi	Gurmukhi	Transliteration	Shahmukhi	Gurmukhi
Māi karsā	میں کرساں	मैं करसां	Māi karāngā	میں کرازگا	मैं करंगा
Asā karsā	آساں کرساں	असां करसां	Asī karānge	آسیں کرانگے	असीं करारंगे
Tū karsāi	توں کرسیں	तुं करसैं	Tū karengā	तوں کریں گا	तुं करेगा
Tusā karso	تُساں کرسو	तुसां करसो	Tusī karoge	تُسی کروگے	तुसीं करेगे
Ó karsi	اوہ کرسی	ਉਹ ਕਰਸੀ	Ó karega	اوہ کرے گا	ਉਹ ਕਰੇगा
Ó karsan	اوہ کرسن	ਉਹ ਕਰਸਨ	Ó karange	اوہ کرن گے	ਉਹ ਕਰਣगे

Object Marker

The object marker in Pothwari is 'Kī' (کی/کِی) as opposed to 'Nū' (نُو/نُہ).

Genitive Marker

The Genitive Marker in Pothwari is represented through the use of 'Nā' (نا/نَا) as opposed to 'Dā' (دا/دَا).

For example:

The phrase: "Lokā Dā" (لوکاں دا/دَا) - meaning "People's" or "of the people" in Standard Punjabi, would become "Lokā Nā" (لوکاں نا/نَا).

The word for 'my' becomes māhaṛā (ماہڑا/ماہڑا) (m.) or māhaṛī (ماہڑی/ماہڑی) (f.).

Vocabulary

Very clear point of departure occurs in the use of Acchṇā (ਅੱਛਣਾ/اچھٹنا ‘to come’) and Gacchṇā (ਗੱਛਣਾ/گچھٹنا ‘to go’) as opposed to Saraiki Āvaṇ (ਆਵਣ/آون) and Vañṇaṇ (ਵੰਞਣ/وچٹ) and Punjabi Āuṇā (ਆਉਣਾ/آوٹا) and Jāṇā (ਜਾਣਾ/جانا)

Notes

- a. Baart (2003, p. 10) provides an estimate of 3.8 million, presumably for the population in Pakistan alone. Lothers & Lothers (2010, p. 9) estimate the Pakistani population at well over 2.5 million and the UK diaspora at over 0.5 million. The population in India is reported in Ethnologue (2017) to be about 1 million as of 2000.
- b. According to Lothers & Lothers (2010, p. 2). Abbasi (2010, p. 104) adds as a fourth dialect the *Poonchi* spoken from Poonch to the Neelam Valley. Yet another classification is reportedly presented in Karnai (2007).
- c. For example, according to the 1981 census report for Rawalpindi District, 85.1% of households had Punjabi as mother tongue. In any census, only a small number of major languages have been counted separately, and there has not been a separate option available for either Pahari or Pothwari.
- d. One language activist from the diaspora in Britain "[has] said that he does not give the language a single name because those who speak the language call it many different things." (Lothers & Lothers 2012, p. 3).
- e. Some, at least in the British diaspora, consider this term to be a misnomer if applied to the language. (Lothers & Lothers 2012, p. 3).
- f. The similarity between wordlists containing 217 items of basic vocabulary from each location. (Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 15–16)

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2. "Pahari" (<http://oed.com/search?searchType=dictionary&q=Pahari>). *Oxford English Dictionary* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press. September 2005. (Subscription or UK public library membership (<https://www.oed.com/public/login/loggingin#withyourlibrary>) required.)
3. Shackle 1979, pp. 200–201.
4. Masica 1991, p. 440.
5. Shackle 1983, p. 183.
6. Shackle 1979, p. 201: Pothohari "is often so close to Panjabi that any attempt to maintain the Lahndi scheme ought probably to reckon it as 'Lahndi merging into Panjabi'."
7. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 2.
8. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 86. Speakers from Muzaffarabad "consider the Mirpur dialect different enough that it is difficult to understand."
9. The alternative English spellings are from Ethnologue (2017).
10. Abbasi & Asif 2010, p. 201.
11. Grierson 1919, p. 432.
12. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 2–3, 19, 112.
13. Lothers & Lothers 2012, pp. 12, 26. At least in terms of lexical similarity..
14. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 2–3, 5, 19, 100.
15. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 44.

16. Shackle 2007, p. 114.
17. Lothers & Lothers 2012, p. 1.
18. Hussain 2015, pp. 483–84.
19. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 23.
20. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 2, 5.
21. Abbasi 2010, p. 104.
22. *Hindko* according to Lothers & Lothers (2010, pp. 5, 39) and *Dhundi* according to Grierson (1919, p. 495). *Pahari* is reported in both sources.
23. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 40, 126–27. The speakers of Pahari in Abbottabad District regard the Hindko of the city of Abbottabad as a different language.
24. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 2, 40.
25. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 2, 5, 8.
26. Grierson 1919, p. 505.
27. Grierson 1919.
28. Abbasi 2010, p. 104; Abbasi & Asif 2010, pp. 201–202
29. Lothers & Lothers 2010. The varieties surveyed here are from Bagh and Muzaffarabad.
30. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 24. The wordlists that form the basis of this comparison are from the variety of Neela Butt.
31. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 24–25.
32. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 26, 80.
33. Lothers & Lothers 2010, pp. 108, 110.
34. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 24.
35. Lothers & Lothers 2010, p. 26; Akhtar & Rehman 2007, p. 68. The conclusion is similarly based on lexical similarity and the comparison is with the Hindko of the Kaghan Valley on one hand and with the Pahari of the Murre Hills on the other.
36. A 2000 estimate reported in Ethnologue (2017)
37. Singh 2014, p. 18; Bhat 2014, ch. 1, pp. 38, 40
38. Lists of regions and settlements are found in Bhat (2014, ch. 1, pp. 40, 43–44) and Kour (2014).
39. "Archived copy" (https://web.archive.org/web/20140903234618/http://jklegislativeassembly.nic.in/Costitution_of_J%26K.pdf) (PDF). Archived from the original (http://jklegislativeassembly.nic.in/Costitution_of_J%26K.pdf) (PDF) on 2014-09-03. Retrieved 2020-04-29.
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